

Monitor Township News



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December 2017



Report from Township Supervisor, Ken Malkin



My first year as township supervisor has been a busy one. I began working on road projects as soon as my term began. My hope was to complete all the remaining road projects and related storm water projects during this past year.

However, it was impossible to overcome all the engineering and legal requirements in time. We will be bidding out the projects that remain (Mutual, Sharon Park, Westhills, Goetz Court, and Beverly subdivisions) in January of 2018. During the winter months we are scheduling all the legally required meetings and deadlines so that the construction can start when the weather permits. We were able to complete a number of road projects this past year. Those roads included Ott, portions of Chip, Fraser, and Wilder Road, most of Kawkawlin Village, Traxler Court, and Haberland Drive. I made numerous visits to all those locations as the work progressed and have been quite pleased with the results. I hope the residents feel the same way.

The township board established a Fire Station fact-find committee this past year made up of residents, fire fighters, and board members. Our Fire Chief had advised the township board that we have outgrown our current station and requested that we address those needs. The mission of the committee is to provide our community with a functional fire station. Hopefully, through this committee, we can address the needs of our fire station in a cost-effective manner. I intend to keep you updated on our progress.

The township board also followed my recommendation to adopt a dangerous buildings ordinance. This ordinance will make it possible for the township to effectively address a complaint for a

building or property that is dangerous to the surrounding neighbors. We have only a small number of these buildings but it is much better to address it early than to wait until it is no longer manageable. I have also been working with the Planning Commission to update our zoning ordinance and have been revising our personnel policies with our Personnel Committee.

I recently appointed Beth Patterson as my Deputy Supervisor. Many of you know her from your visits and phone calls to our township offices. She is usually the first person to greet you when you come in or to answer the phone. Everyone who meets her knows what an outstanding asset she is to our township as our administrative secretary. Now you can add the title of Deputy Supervisor as she has been my right hand here at the township ever since my term started.

Ken Malkin, Supervisor



Report from Clerk, Cindy L. Kowalski

Interested in Working an Election and Becoming an Election Inspector?

Are you retired or over 16 years of age and would like to provide a service to your local community? Monitor Township is currently taking applications for election inspectors. No prior experience is necessary.

All training will be provided and training sessions will be conducted in June 2018. Applications are available Monday – Friday at the township offices during regular business hours. Involve yourself in the election process and **Apply Today!**

Upcoming Elections in 2018

August 7, 2018	Primary Election
November 6, 2018	General Election

Close of Registration Dates

July 10, 2018	Last day to register for Primary Election
October 10, 2018	Last day to register for General Election

Cindy L. Kowalski, Clerk

Report from Township Treasurer, Sue Pike



Tax Collection Hours are Monday through Friday
9:00 am – 12:00 pm & 1:00 pm – 4:00 pm
Closed 12:00 pm – 1:00 pm for lunch.

As we enter into a new tax year, here are few reminders for **Winter Tax Season**.

Winter Taxes will be mailed out December 1st, 2017. Please be sure to carefully review your bill for any corrections. Taxes are not forwarded in the US mail, so, for you snow birds... please stop in to see the Assessor to have your address changed to your December address, and again when you return to your Summer address. If you do not receive your tax bill by the 10th, please call our office at (989) 684-7203.

For Summer 2017 taxes that have not been paid, remember you can make payments anytime. Partial payments are always accepted. Cash, Check and Money Orders are preferred payments. Sorry, but Credit or Debit cards are not accepted. There is a one 1% penalty each month until February 14th, 2018, less an admin fee. Please feel free to call the office for the correct adjusted payoff figure. (989) 684-7203

This winter we have Culver Creek, Wolverine, Kolb, Wilcox and Phillips Assessments for any of you that have property that these drains run through. You will have a clean out/maintenance charge from the Drain Commission assessed to your tax bill.

Thank you to all of you who used our drop box located in the parking lot for after-hour convenience. We check it twice a day to make sure that your payments are applied promptly. If you are paying by mail, your tax bill includes your receipt. Please tear off at the bottom and mail with your payment. **KEEP THE TOP PORTION FOR YOUR RECEIPT. NOTE: Additional copies are 35¢ each.** To our residents that requested a stamped paid receipt, be sure to include a stamped self-addressed envelope with your payment. **All checks MUST include your phone number.** We find several errors in checks and by having a contact number to call; we can have them corrected before they are taken to the bank. Remember, if you transpose a number, it may incur an NSF fee, so please include your phone number on all checks. If you have **DEFERRED YOUR TAXES**, please remember that payment is due by **February 14, 2018.**

As a service to the community, we issue cat and dog licenses for Bay County which are available at the tax window. Remember, you must present your rabies certificate to be issued a license.



Wishing you all a Merry Christmas & a Happy New Year!

Reminder Offices Closed: December 25th & 26th, January 1st, 2nd, 15th, February 19th, March 30th, & May 28th



Report from Fire Chief, John Kramer

Greetings! It is time of the year when we begin to once again use our furnaces and fireplaces. Please remember to have your heating systems checked and maintained. Always make sure your fireplaces are cleaned and clear of any obstructions or a buildup of creosol. Creosol is a substance that builds up on the walls of the fireplace chimney and is flammable. When it heats up it will ignite and cause a chimney fire. These fires can cause a lot of damage to your home and have at times caused homes to burn to the ground. Please take the time to have them inspected, cleaned and in good working order. Always keep flammable materials at least 3' feet from the opening and keep the screen closed to keep burning embers from popping out of the fireplace on to the floor or carpet. This is also a good

time to re-check your smoke detectors to make sure they are in proper working order and the batteries are changed.

Burning Permits. Fall is also the time when our trees decide to drop all the leaves onto the ground. Please remember that it is a Township Ordinance and Law that you must obtain a burning permit from the Fire Department in order to burn leaves, brush, wood etc. If you have a burn barrel you still need a permit to burn these items. There is no burning of any refuse of any kind in Monitor Township. The DEQ law does not allow the burning of grass clippings. These rules and laws are there for not only your protection, but the protection of your neighbors. The easiest way to determine whether or not you need a permit is simple....If it is not the size of a small camp fire and only a few logs, you need a permit. Recreational camp fires are allowed without a permit, but they still fall under the nuisance smoke portion of the ordinance, so be considerate of your neighbors and make sure the wind is blowing in the right direction. You cannot start a fire and then leave it unattended. You must be present at all times and ready to extinguish it if it gets out of control. **Burning permits are available at the fire station and are free.** You must come to the station to sign for them -- they cannot be issued over the phone. You face fines and legal issues from the township and the DNR and/or the DEQ if you are caught burning without a permit. Do the right thing, play it safe and get a permit. If you have questions concerning what you can and cannot burn, please feel free to give us a call at (989) 684-6320 with your questions.

Christmas time is an enjoyable time of the year and we ask that you practice safety during the holiday.

Decorations:

- Avoid using highly flammable decorations; i.e.: dried flowers, cornstalks, hay bales and crepe paper near candles and open flames.
- Keep decorations away from any heat source; candles, light bulbs and heaters.
- Use only decorative lights that have been tested and certified for safety. Check lights, new or old, for broken or cracked sockets, frayed wires, bare wires, and loose connections. Discard damaged sets.
- Don't overload electrical outlets or extension cords with holiday lighting or special effects.
- Keep exits clear of decorations, ensuring nothing blocks escape routes.
- Have two ways out of the home and practice exit drills should fire break out with your family.



We thank everyone who attended our **Open House** during **Fire Prevention Week.** Please feel free to stop by anytime, we are here 24/7 365 days a year.



We wish you a **Merry Christmas** and **Happy New Year** and as always practice safe fire prevention.

Chief John R. Kramer



Report from the Sheriff Department
Deputy Eric Anthony & Ryan Christie



Winter Weather Driving Tips

- Buckle up and please SLOW down.
- Allow more space between your vehicle and the one in front of you.
- Brake early and gently to avoid skidding and never slam on the brakes.
- Use headlights to be more visible to other motorists.
- Avoid using cruise control on icy roads.
- Avoid distractions such as talking on a cell phone and texting. Please **DO NOT** text and drive.
- Stay alert and watch out for other drivers.



Remember, if you are going out of town for the winter or the holidays stop by the township offices to fill out a **Vacation House Check Form** and have your business or home checked and patrolled periodically when personnel and time are made available.
Have a Safe Holiday! Sheriff Dept.: (989) 895-4050.



Sanitary Sewer System

The rain event that occurred on June 22nd and 23rd this past summer caused a great deal of damage to many of our Monitor Township residents. The rain fell on already saturated soil causing our rivers to overflow and flooding our county drains. However, we also had a great deal of water that entered the Bay County Sanitary Sewer system. Clearly this should not occur. Monitor Township has been trying to do our part to solve this issue. We have received a grant to document our current infrastructure. Issues that were discovered as a direct result of this grant are being addressed. However, nothing was discovered during that evaluation that would account for the huge inflow of water during that rain event. As a result, we are working with the Bay County Department of Water and Sewer to conduct water flow monitoring throughout the township. This is an attempt to determine how the excessive flow of rainwater is entering the sanitary sewer system so that we can address the issue.

Residents can help. You can install check valves in your home to keep sewage from backing up during a rain event. However, the check valves do require regular maintenance annually to work properly. You can also frequently check your sump pumps and downspouts to make sure they are not entering the sanitary sewer system. The sump pumps could be an expensive repair; however, the downspouts are not. If the downspouts are entering the ground into the sanitary sewer system, you merely disconnect the downspout at the bottom and let it run onto your lawn.

As a result of these issues, it will be necessary to increase the sanitary sewer rates. We had hoped that the small increase from earlier this year would be

sufficient. Our rates have been much lower than the other townships however, that has resulted over the years in underfunding our sanitary sewer system and depleted our fund balance at the Department of Water and Sewer. Even with a rate increase, we will still have among the lowest rates in the county.

Trash Pickup Reminders



Waste Management **RECOMMENDS** that all garbage is taken out the evening before or by 6:30 a.m. on the morning of your trash pickup.
Remember: This also applies to yard waste.

Have a large item to be picked up? One (1) large item a week may be put out on the same day as your trash.
NOTE: A separate bulk truck handles large pickups and in most cases the item is picked up the day after your regular trash pickup day.

Waste Management's number is 1-800-796-9696



Yard Waste Begins: April 1st, 2018



Monitor Township Park



The park has closed for the season but residents are still encouraged to walk their dogs year round. I hope you have been enjoying the new dog waste stations that have been installed. Please be a responsible owner and pick up after your pet in order to keep our park clean for everyone.

The township has been awarded a grant to renovate the park. Currently, the work is scheduled to take place in **May and June of 2018**. As a result, the north side of the park and the pavilion will be closed during that time. **Reservations Begin: January 3, 2018**



Township Hours & Building Department Info

Office Hours:	9 am -12 pm & 1 pm – 5 pm
Tax Collection Hours:	9 am -12 pm & 1 pm – 4 pm
Assessor* Tod Fackler:	8 am -12 pm & 1 pm – 4 pm Wednesday & Thursday
Building Department	8 am -12 pm X 206
Carol Goodwin.....	Bldg. & Zoning Admin. Assistant
Dave DeGrow.....	Building Inspector-In the Field
David Rochow.....	Zoning Enforcement- In the Field
Electrical Inspector	
Frank Bryden.....	(989) 894-5053...Direct
Plumbing & Mechanical Inspector	
Dell Bedford.....	(989) 272-5108...Direct

Happy Holidays

Fireworks Displays



We received this past summer a number of complaints about a number of our neighborhoods organizing large fireworks displays. We are not referring to fireworks in front of an individual's household. Anyone putting on such a display for a party or social gathering must first have a permit from the township before doing so. That permit then needs to be approved by our township board.

Please contact the township well in advance if you intend to put on such a display in the future. The township does not want to be in the position of closing down a performance as a result of failing to obtain the necessary permits.



Unwanted Newspapers

Many residents have complained to the township in the winter months about receiving unwanted newspapers in the yard and driveways. Please contact the Bay City Times to request that your house be removed from the delivery list. Phone: (989) 671-1201 or via email: customercare@mlive.com



January – June 2018 Meeting Dates



Township Board 4 th Monday of each month		
January 22 nd	February 26 th	March 26 th
April 23 rd	May 14 th	June 25 th
Planning Commission 1 st Tuesday of each month		
January 3 rd	February 6 th	March 6 th
April 3 rd	May 1 st	June 5 th
July 3 rd	August 8 th *	*Wednesday
Zoning Board of Appeals* 3 rd Thursday of each month		
January 18 th	February 15 th	March 15 th
April 19 th	May 1 st	June 5 th

Zoning Board Meets: *ONLY AS NEEDED



Township Elected Officials & Administrative Staff

Supervisor	Ken Malkin	supervisor@monitortwp.org
Clerk	Cindy Kowalski	clerk@monitortwp.org
Treasurer	Sue Pike	treasurer@monitortwp.org
Assessor:	Tod Fackler	assessor@monitortwp.org
Deputy Clerk		Linda Ferguson
Deputy Treasurer		Josie Hill
Administrative Secretary and Deputy Supervisor		officemanager@monitortwp.org Beth L. Patterson
Building Assistant	Carol Goodwin	building@monitortwp.org
Trustee:	Gary A. Brandt	Trustee: Elaine Kochany
Trustee:	Bill Reder	Trustee Bob Walsh